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Bet You Missed It

Compiled by **Mike Markwith** (The Faxon Company) and
Katina Strauch (College of Charleston)

*Abstracts of articles
of interest. Remember,
there is an April Fool's
joke somewhere in this
issue of Against the
Grain!*

The Other Side of the Coin —
"More Library Materials Justifica-
tions," by Albert Henderson in
Book Research Quarterly for
fall, 1990, on pages 81-88.

This article compliments an article which appeared in *Book Research Quarterly* in the winter of 1990 by Fred Lynden ("Library Materials Budget Justifications"). Henderson points to three arguments to justify increased funding for library materials budgets which have been overlooked by most librarians. The three arguments are based on the accelerating publication rate, the shrinking of library budgets as a percentage of GNP, and the consequences for research of inadequate library holdings. The tables presented may be particularly helpful. It doesn't hurt to try . . .

Katina Strauch (College of
Charleston)

Rush it, or Lose it — "The Rush to Publish," by Leslie Roberts in *Science* magazine, for January 18, 1991.

We all know about publish or perish, but this article is about publishing quickly, something which many of us have never accused publishers of. *Cell*, *Nature*, and *Science* are just three of the popular science journals that researchers vie to get papers published in. And sometimes there are the papers on the fast track that researchers try to get published quickly. For example,

there is the situation where two people have discovered the same thing independently (like White and Collins and the discovery of the neurofibromatosis gene). Apparently, the phenomenon of trying to get breakthroughs into print quickly is old, dating back to the seventeenth century "when in an effort to get scientists to divulge their data, an obscure secretary of the Royal Society of London came up with the rule that priority goes to whoever publishes first—not who discovers first. Researchers have been vying to publish first ever since." And this article is about some of the pitfalls and alternatives. It gives us just a tiny glimpse at competition from a different perspective — competition among prestigious journals to publish fast track papers first.

Rick Heldrick (College of
Charleston)

Long Time Coming — **Congressman Submits "National Vendor Appreciation Month" Bill** — exclusive to *Against the Grain* — by Richard Jasper (Emory University)

In an effort to shore up the national economy, Congressman A.F. Day, D-Ga. has introduced legislation designating April as "National Vendor Appreciation Month." (NVAM) The measure, now in committee, would require the nation's public and academic libraries to make "appropriate gestures of appreciation" for the efforts performed on their behalf by monographic firm order vendors and subscription agents. "Competition for book and serial business is fierce these days, what with the sagging economy and the devalued dollar," said Congressman Day, reached recently at his Commerce, Georgia home. "We figured NVAM was the least we could do." Besides, he added, "if we don't take this action

now, the Republicans may beat us to it." The bill has a long list of "appropriate gestures" librarians and libraries should make. Among them: "Every library should take its vendor reps out to lunch during the month; every library should immediately pay all invoices received in that month." And most importantly, "every library should agree, effective in NVAM, to place all orders using the 'Universal Standard Book and Serial Order Form'" (now under consideration by Congressman Day's committee). "These measures are sure to have a profound effect on each vendor's overall profitability, with a corresponding increase in national productivity," said Congressman Day, who added that his informal poll of committee members indicates the bill has a good chance of success. "After this," he said, "I'll be working on a bill to outlaw pond-raised catfish. They're an insult to the working people of America and the state of Georgia." Actions speak louder than words. Need we say more.

Richard Jasper (Emory
University)

Roses are Red, Violets are Blue, *Daily News*, Robert Maxwell loves you — "Agreement Reached to Save *Daily News*: Striking Unions Clear Way for A Purchase," by Alan Finder in *The New York Times*, March 13, 1991, p.1. Accompanying article by Alessandra Stanley, "Rushing from Yacht to Jet, Maxwell Relishes New Role."

Robert Maxwell strikes again. Now he is known to the man on the street in New York. And the 67-year-old magnate is happy. He is purchasing *The New York Daily News* from the Tribune Company.

The purchase involved drama, showmanship, and grit. Apparently, "the settlement was achieved after deadlines set by Mr Maxwell came and went for two days. Negotiations went on practically around the clock, as exhausted labor officials, anxious union members and thousands of interested New Yorkers wondered whether a 71-year-old mainstay of the city's public life would survive the week." In order to reach an agreement, the union made concessions which will save an estimated \$70 million a year (800 jobs were eliminated). It's a strange 'sale.' Maxwell will pay nothing for the paper which has been in the midst of a strike for five months. Though the Tribune Company will pay Maxwell \$60 million to take over *The Daily News*, Maxwell estimates that he will have to invest "at least \$10 million in the first six to eight weeks, in an attempt to rebuilt the paper's circulation and advertising." Maxwell plans to write editorials himself and to attempt to hire some of his favorite types like Art Buchwald and Jimmy Breslin if he can afford them. Maxwell does not plan to bring editors from Britain, but to use many of the existing people at *The Daily News* such as the current editor James P. Willse. "...Helping to restore the city's economic stability would be a major concern of the paper," Maxwell said. Anyway, Maxwell said in another quote, "I never celebrate. This is a sobering additional responsibility to take on 1,800 people's jobs and the survival of a monument."

Lyman Newlin (Book Trade
Counsellor)

When I visited London and Oxford in 1989, I tried to see Robert Maxwell. I was hoping to persuade him to speak at the Charleston Conference in 1989, 1990 or anytime. Dream on! What an experience that was! My saga ranged between Maxwell House in London and the Pergamon Press estate in Oxford. It also included countless pleading phone calls to Maxwell's many legions of secretaries at all hours of the day and night. Mr. Maxwell, apparently, rarely sleeps and works all the time, even into the wee hours of the night. So, too the people who work for him. Alas, I never even spoke to him nor did I even receive a letter from him. Oh well, nothing ventured . . . I always say.
Your Editor

There's Security in Numbers —
"Who's No.1 in Science? Footnotes Say U.S." by Gina Kolata, in *The New York Times* for Tuesday, February 12, 1991, p. C1.

Remember when *Science* magazine recently reported that 55% of papers that were published in journals were never cited? Well, Dr. Eugene Garfield of the Institute for Scientific Information says that "the 55% figure included minor items like meeting abstracts, not just scientific papers. With the minor items excluded, the proportion of American articles that are never cited drops to 15%." The whole thing just goes to show that nothing is cut and dried and that citation analysis can be misused. For example, there are the "self citers" (those who cite themselves) and those who cite the referees of papers they have submitted for publication. Anyway, the editor of *Science Watch*, David Pendlebury, reports that "only 15 percent of American papers are not cited in the five years after they are written. The world average, by contrast, is 23% for papers that are never cited, or 33% if U.S. papers are excluded."

Rick Heldrick (College of
Charleston)

Ready, Aim, Libraries —
"Publishers are Looking to Libraries for Growth, by Edwin McDowell in *The New York Times* for Monday, March 18, 1991, p. C6.

This article talks about how publishers are trying to learn more

about libraries and how some of them (Bantam, Doubleday, Dell) are going out there and working in libraries this spring and summer. "Libraries are an important market for our books, so we thought it's time to get to know them better." Maybe someone out there is listening. Since publishers do not have the sales force for libraries that they do for bookstores, some publishers realize that libraries work through distributors. And the library market looks good to distributors and publishers. "Total library acquisitions through 1994 are projected by the Book Industry Study Group to grow at an 8.7% compounded annual rate."

Lyman Newlin (Book Trade
Counsellor)

Literacy, Adoption, and Libraries —
"New Yorkers Fear for Literacy as Libraries Cut Back," by Felicia R. Lee in *The New York Times*, for March 6, 1991, p. B1.

"These are dark days for New York City's public libraries. To help close a budget gap that exceeds \$2 billion over the next 16 months, the city has slashed \$14.7 million, about 11 percent, from its budget of about \$133 million for library operations, and state financing is expected to be cut about 10 percent." Even the New York Public Library has had its budget severely cut by 37%, the article says. But maybe somebody out there is listening. Some people are distressed and they are "adopting a branch" to help out. Will the general public come to appreciate libraries?

Lyman Newlin (Book Trade
Counsellor)